



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## Programming Guide for Strategy Papers

<b>Programming fiche</b>	
<b>Support to Non-State Actors</b>	Date: March 2009

### 1. Definition of support to Non-State Actors (NSAs)

Support to Non-State Actors (NSAs), such as the national and international NGOs, the media, the economic and social partners, the research bodies, women's associations, the organisations representing the vulnerable and marginalised groups such as young people, indigenous peoples or the minorities, rural communities, the other organisations presenting a special statute such as the Red Cross, etc aims to assist NSAs in their role of responsible partner in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the country.

Supporting NSAs means contributing to reinforcing their capacities in :

- (1) improving the structure and the internal organisation, developing the constituent components (expansion of the networks), developing qualities of leadership and promotion competences, encouraging viable fund collection mechanisms, etc;
- (2) developing their advocacy capacity vis-à-vis the government, both at central level and at local level, to ensure that the needs of the population are represented at all levels, and, in this respect, to increase the abilities of NSAs for political analysis and dialogue;
- (3) developing their capacity to play a role of supervisor vis-à-vis the state institutions or concerning a particular issue of general interest aiming to make the government and the local authorities responsible for their choices/actions before the citizens;
- (4) developing their capacity of service suppliers. The capacities of organisational and financial management of the NSAs have to be strengthened if they are to be involved in the provision of public services and if the quality of these services has to be guaranteed;
- (5) improving research capacities in order to concentrate the interventions on the development policies targeting the poor, to articulate the concerns of disadvantaged communities and the

.../...

agendas of the governments and donors and to identify best practices having to be reproduced or adapted to other contexts facing similar challenges as regards development.

- (6) increasing their capacity to work in networks and multi-actor partnerships

## **2. Participation of NSAs in the analysis of country situation**

In addition to the basic "institutional" principles, such as legitimate government, political pluralism or free and just elections, the democratic societies also have intermediate structures, i.e. the media, organised civil society, who guarantee the effective exercise of the citizens' sovereignty and their continuous participation in the decision-making processes. The analysis of the political situation of the country should reflect the way in which the participatory approaches are implemented. It is suggested to evaluate progress achieved and gaps remaining to the consolidation of NSAs' engagement in the development process (participation in the decision-making processes and in the discussions on priorities as regards national development, participative character of budgetary procedures, legislative framework, financing environment, system of registration, etc).

In certain circumstances, it can also be very useful to take into account the capacity of government authorities to interact with NSAs and accordingly to envisage support targeted for the official actors, in particular on the issue of the legislative environment in which civil society functions.

The carrying out of a mapping study can be a good starting point for a programme of support to NSAs. Indeed, it can be used as a starting point for the development of a vision and of an overall strategy for support to NSAs and to define the components of a capacity building programme for NSAs. (see programming fiche on Consultation of NSA and LA within the framework of the preparation of the Country Strategy Papers(CSPs))

## **3. Taking into account of support to NSAs in the Community response strategy**

The response strategies of the EC should systematically envisage capacity building for NSAs. All National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) should allocate appropriate financing for this type of interventions. This involves defining an overall intervention strategy to support civil society: the capacity strengthening programmes for NSAs have to take place at the centre of the overall Community strategy creating bridges between these programmes and the remainder of the sectors supported in the CSP to promote an effective participation of NSAs in the definition of public policies.

If programmes are already under way, the results obtained and the activities undertaken have to be evaluated and a possible increase in the resources or a new support phase can be envisaged if necessary, in order to diversify the fields of intervention or to involve new non-state actors. If, following the examination of the engagement and disbursement rate in relation to the initial timetable, serious delays in the implementation of the programme are detected, the causes of these delays have to be explained and measures to accelerate the implementation must be proposed.

If the government lacks the political will to provide aid for the strengthening of the capacities of NSAs, the issue should be tackled by political dialogue with the partner country at the suitable level. In this context, it is advisable to point out the existing link between the democratic principles and the participatory approaches on the one hand and the need to promote the engagement of the various actors to consolidate a more inclusive political system and to guarantee the sustainable character of the development strategies on the other. If the problem is not resolved, the Delegation should envisage creating a pilot project apart the foreseen envelope. Or else, make use of the **Community Thematic Programmes** at the national level with the aim of establishing confidence between the state and NSAs and to channel aid for NSAs at national or regional level by means of geographical programmes (NIPs/RIPs), which are a usual component of cooperation as regards development.

For ACP countries, capacity building for NSAs is a requesting under the Cotonou Agreement. Consequently, if an agreement cannot be concluded on the amount to reserve especially for the support of NSAs in the national indicative programme, the strategy paper has to provide the reasons for that. Moreover, it is up to the Delegation to propose the country in question for the list of targeted countries to benefit from the Thematic Programme NSAs and LAs in Development.

Support to NSAs should form part of the non priority intervention sectors. As a result of the revision of the Cotonou Agreement, the strategy papers and the national indicative programmes should identify the types of non-state actors eligible for financing, the resources granted to NSAs and the nature of the activities to be supported, which have to be non profit making. It seems preferable to leave a flexibility margin and not to define the types of activity too rigidly. Community dialogue with NSAs, other donors and the relevant authorities should make it possible to examine "the agenda of strengthening of the capacities of the NSAs", to select the fields that the Commission could cover and to identify the resources that can be mobilised.

Support to NSAs has however also to be ensured in the macroeconomic support programmes and/or the sectoral programmes in which those have an added value. The strengthening of the capacities of the NSAs aiming to allow the latter to take part in the definition of an overall or sectoral policy, to the definition of a budgetary framework in the medium term, to the implementation of a policy as a service supplier or as supervisor of the transparency or the impact of its implementation can then be ensured either by the specific reinforcement programme of the capacities of the NSAs. Or by means of technical assistance components that accompany in general the macroeconomic or sectoral support, or finally, in unfavourable political contexts, by means of the thematic programmes.

In accordance with Annex IV of the Cotonou Agreement, Articles 4 (1) d and 15 (4), the NSAs can receive direct financing on the part of the Delegation. However this solution has obviously to be used only as a last resort when it clearly appears that the national governments are hostile to the implementation of a support programme for NSAs.

To be able to benefit from this provision, it is however necessary that this type of support is envisaged in the CSP and NIP (reserved amount and type of activities envisaged). It is thus suggested to the Delegations planning to use this clause to insert in the NIP the following note: "Support for the NSAs covers the NSAs eligible for financing as defined in Article 6 of the Cotonou Agreement and Article 4

(1) (d) of Annex IV of the revised agreement. According to their mandate, support for NSAs can cover, amongst other things, activities of capacity strengthening, advocacy, research, awareness-raising, follow-up and provision of services to the population. To support NSAs, the EC can make use of Article 15.4, which allows it to act as a contracting authority. An amount of... € is available for that purpose."

The strategy papers should only give an outline of the interventions that will be undertaken. The objective is to ensure that NSAs become actors of development; able of getting more effectively involved beside the government and donors agencies in the development process.

#### **4. Useful links for more information on support to NSAs**

- Communication from the European Commission to the Council, to the European Parliament and to the Economic and Social Committee, Participation of the non-state actors to the Community development policy, COM (2002) 598 final, November 2002
- [Guidelines on the principles and good practices as regards participation of the non-state actors in the dialogues and in the consultations on development](#) (November 2004)
- [Communication on the thematic programmes "The non-state actors and the local authorities in development"](#)
- Multi-annual [Strategy](#) of the thematic Programme "Non-State actors and Local Authorities"
- [2008](#) work programme of the thematic Programme " Non-State actors and Local Authorities "
- Evaluation of aid granted through civil society (EVA/116-833) (2008).

For the ACP countries:

- [Revised Cotonou Agreement](#) [Article 58, Annex IV, Article 4 and 15]
- [Guidelines for Delegations of the EC on the implementation of the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement on Non-State Actors](#) (September 2003)
- ACP States - Council of the EU common document on the eligibility criteria to NSAs - access to the resources of the EDF (available in EN and FR)

#### **5. List of possible indicators**

The following indicators can help evaluate the development of the capacities of the Non-State Actors in the partner country:

- Results of the projects carried out directly by NSAs
  - evaluation of the partnership with NSAs and of the sustainable character of the programmes: to what extent will the project implemented by NSAs have a structural and/or long-term effect? Will it contribute to improving legislation, the practices or the policies as regards development? Is it envisaged to continue the project and to guarantee it a sustainable effect?
  - evaluation of the capacities of the management of NSAs, with regard in particular to the personnel, equipment and the aptitude to manage the budget for their actions;
  - evaluation of the level of engagement and of participation of the target groups in the project;
  - evaluation of the impact of the knowledge and experience of NSAs in the field covered by the programme concerned.
- Added value/relevance of the policies/initiatives put forward by NSAs in the exercise of their advocacy role
- The effectiveness of support for the constitution of networks can be measured against the number of specialised networks involved in the political dialogue, the quality of their contributions to the political debate, their capacity to call on their constituencies, their aptitude to create new dialogue structures and to work out strategies of information and communication intended for civil society, etc. The strengthening of the capacities of the constituencies and the aptitude to represent them also constitute valid indicators in this context.
- The capacity of NSAs to consider priorities such as poverty reduction, the vulnerable social groups, particular gender specific needs, human rights and democracy, the promotion of good governance, the strengthening of economic and social development, as well as the consolidation of social and political dialogue.
- The capacity of NSAs to provide:
  1. proof of a clear organisational structure reflecting the basic principles of democracy, of transparency and of responsibility, as well as the organisational chart of the organisation;
  2. information on the decision-making process within the organisation;
  3. an indicative list indicating the sources of financing and expenditure;
  4. as far as possible, the proof of independence vis-à-vis the States and the administrations;
  5. description of the relations (other than financial) with the government