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→ Bringing the voice of NGOs to a global scale: the Non-Governmental Diplomacy

Experience and perspectives of the IFP



International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP)

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Acronyms

AU: African Union

CFS/ FAO: Committee on World Food Security of the Food and Agriculture Organization

CSM: Civil Society Mechanism

CSO: Civil Society Organization

ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States

IFP: International Forum of National NGO Platforms

LAOPD : Latin American Association for Organizations Promoting Development

NGD: Non-Governmental Diplomacy

NGDE: Non-Governmental Diplomacy Exercise

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NPF: National Platform of NGO

RC: Regional Coalition of NGO Platform

SADC-CNGO: Southern African Development Community Council of NGO

WSF: World Social Forum



1. NON-GOVERNMENTAL DIPLOMACY: CONCEPT, JUSTIFICATION AND POTENTIAL

“The situation of the nearly three-quarters of humankind who live in the continents of the South is inadmissible. There are thus no grounds to accept it. This is the very simple fact shared by international solidarity organizations. The first manifestation of this refusal of the unacceptable is a determination to act as closely as possible to the realities and the actors involved. This first mission has led to two others: the ambition of bringing the citizens or the organizations of our countries closer to partners of the countries of the South, and the need to analyze the rules of the international game and to make them change to become more equitable.”

Elements contributing to the definition of a “Non-governmental diplomacy”
Henry Rouillé d’Orfeuil and Jorge Eduardo Durao
September 2003

The concept of diplomacy is moving towards a mechanism of representation, communication and negotiation through which governments and other actors are conducting their business. The methods themselves have changed: there is a growing importance of multilateralism, negotiations are becoming increasingly technical, and there is an assertion of new technology in the exchange of information and communication.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) enter international relations on the strength of their legitimacy and expertise. They interact with governments, international organizations, local communities and all kinds of private groups. Their legitimacy stems from their commitment to civil society in local and diverse communities and the partnerships they develop with territories and populations. Their professionalism gives them influence on the main subjects of global interest.

NGOs are in the corridors of “conference diplomacy”. This activism is particularly evident in the negotiations regarding the “common heritage of mankind”, such as the Environment and Human Rights, as demonstrated by the formal participation of NGOs in Stockholm in 1972 and Rio in 1992 and the negotiations on the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. It is this “quiet lobbying”, supported by legal arguments, which expresses the influence of NGOs. Influence which is unfortunately all too often exerted by Northern NGOs – custodians of human and material resources that enable them to confront government diplomats. In addition, it cannot touch certain areas that still fall under those of quasi-monopoly states (disarmament, trade, energy, financial regulation, conflict resolution, etc.).

In order to fully realize the potential of non-governmental diplomacy, NGOs face two challenges: on firstly that of organization and creation of a “collective international actor for solidarity” and secondly that of the definition of common positions and proposals.

NGOs are struggling to promote the emergence of governance and regulation that would enable the establishment of world solidarity, along with all other actors in international relations. Strengthened by organization and shared positions, and strengthened by proposals for actions they undertake to pursue the claims they address to governments, legitimized by experience and local and diverse partnerships, in the context of awakening universal consciousness, NGOs are undertaking non-governmental diplomacy in order to attain globally shared goals.



2. THE IFP AND THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL DIPLOMACY

THE IFP, A GLOBAL ACTOR

Civil society has a crucial role to play in a world that is increasingly complex and globalized. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) work with people around the world in general interest, so that they can exercise their rights and benefit from a better life. NGOs should have a voice, through extensive participation in global governance, where key policies regarding development that have an impact on the planet and its population, are developed. The National NGO Platforms (NPF) unite the voices of their members and should be recognised as legitimate and credible partners at the global level.

The International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP) includes 53 of these platforms, as well as 7 regional coalitions and can thus take advantage of the “network effect”. The IFP brings together platforms from Northern and Southern countries, the least developed and industrialised countries. This makes it a unique global entity ideally positioned to influence international policies while strengthening the institutional capacities of its members.

TIMELINE

The origins of IFP: in 2003, cooperation was initiated between the French platform Coordination SUD and its Brazilian counterpart ABONG. This Franco-Brazilian partnership has expanded to include three other partners in, India (VANI), Chile (ACCION) and Senegal (CONGAD). This process culminated in 2008 with the creation of the IFP.

October 2008: representatives of NPF from 82 countries met in Paris to strengthen the foundations of the International Forum of National NGO Platforms.

February 2011: the first General Assembly of the IFP, held in February 2011, brought together more than 50 NPF and regional coalitions.

2009–11: several meetings of the Facilitation Group, the political body of the IFP, contributed to its structuring and consolidation.

March 2012: appointment of the new IFP Council consisting of 15 members elected on the basis of geographical criteria. The Council met two times, in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 and New Delhi in January 2013.

▼ **2012:** strengthening and formalization of the IFP membership.

Who are we?



A SHARED VISION: The IFP aims to be a representative network of NPFs and regional coalitions of NGOs working at a global level to contribute to Development, Peace and Justice throughout the world. The IFP aims to create the conditions for the effective implication of NGOs in global governance so that they can influence international negotiations on development, human rights and international solidarity.

A STRUCTURE representative of global civil society which highlights the number, representativeness and legitimacy of its member platforms, as well as the diversity of topics covered (humanitarian emergency, support to development, defence of human rights, protection of the environment, conflict resolution, etc.).

AN OPERATION governed by shared principles:

- Of good democratic governance;
- Of transparency and information sharing;
- Of participation of its members based on equal footing.

ACTIVITIES of:

- Pooling of services for the benefit of member platforms;
- Capacity building of NPFs and regional coalitions of NGOs, through the exchange of best practices and organisational support;
- Construction of common advocacy positions at national, regional and international levels on issues of global interest;
- Participation in multi-stakeholder dialogues and mechanisms of regional and global governance.

... Resulting in a positive influence on public policies affecting civil society, the reduction of inequalities, on the environment and sustainable development.

From the beginning, the concept of non-governmental diplomacy has been at the heart of the IFP's activities. At the International Conference of NGO Platforms in October 2008, six priority themes or "non-governmental diplomacy exercises" (NGDE) were identified by the 82 platforms represented. At the end of 2011, a seventh NGD exercise was formulated and approved by the IFP Facilitation Group.

The NGDE is a methodology to determine shared analyses, to develop advocacy initiatives and to construct coherent positioning on issues of global interest in order to exert influence in international negotiation processes. The NGDE are also a tool for capacity building to help NPF to practice substantive diplomacy and to elaborate proposals and strategies to engage at the international level.



IFP's General Assembly, Senegal, 2011

The 7 thematic NGDE conducted under the IFP framework between 2009 and 2012 related to global development issues are:

- Prevention and resolution of conflicts;
- Financing for Development;
- Regulation of agricultural markets;
- Climate change;
- Access to water and sanitation;
- Fighting social inequalities and exclusion;
- Enabling environment for CSOs.

Reflection on each topic is conducted within a Working Group involving NPFs and regional coalitions of IFP members who have expressed their interest and agreement. A platform or coalition acts as the Secretariat of each Working Group.

The coordinator works in a network to support the development of common positions. The work of the Groups is conducted in at least two of the four languages used in the IFP (English, Spanish, French, Portuguese). Their progress and their proceedings are published on the website: www.ong-ngo.org.

The national NGO platforms that form a Working Group define a common document on a given topic, assuring a strategic view on the progress of negotiations at the international level, organising and relaying general information and producing documentation for members of the IFP. They also work to mobilise additional funding for the exercises as well as for attendance at meetings and conferences.

The Secretariat of the NGDE ensures that all positions advanced by the platforms on the topic are known within the Group and that each of the participating platforms widely communicates information regarding the common positions with their government, their members, and international and regional institutions. The exercise can then be transformed into a non-governmental diplomacy approach.

After three years of increasing influence, the time had come for the IFP - as part of its 2013-2015 action plan- to conduct a review of the results obtained by its major advocacy activity, the NGDE. An evaluation effort was made by its Secretariat and this capitalisation booklet in your hands is its result.

PRESENTATION OF THE IFP'S NON-GOVERNMENTAL DIPLOMACY EXERCISES

Prevention and resolution of conflicts



Context

No economic and social right can be realised without the right to live in peace and security. For this, the prevention and resolution of conflicts – which are also becoming regional- are key concerns for establishing sustainable and human development.

NPF & RC PARTNERS

CNONGD (DRC – Secretariat), CIONGCA (CAR), CCOD (Congo), FONGA (Angola), CCOAIB (Rwanda), CILONG (Chad), CONGAC (Cameroon), CNOP (Gabon), REPONGAC (RC of Central Africa).

Main activities

- National and regional **workshops** on the role of different actors (civil society, international institutions) in the prevention/ resolution of conflicts.
- A **survey** conducted in 6 Central African countries on the perception of conflicts and their consequences in terms of development: ongoing assessment, presentation and cross-analysis of data, elaboration of references and advocacy options.
- Conceptualisation of the contribution of civil society to peace and stability as a driver of economic development, and **training** of NGDE participants in advocacy techniques.
- Evaluation of the November 2011 elections in the DRC and **advocacy** with 60 Members of Parliament to demand the reform of the electoral law and restructuring of the Electoral Commission.

Results

- **Participation of different actors:** more than 60 CSOs in the DRC, numerous NPFs and CSOs in Central Africa, the SADC-CNGO regional platform and numerous NGO representatives from regional and international organisations were involved in the NGDE.
- **Awareness raising and dialogue:** the actors involved were made aware of the importance of taking a citizen-based and apolitical approach to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and were informed through analyses of documents and data. Constructive dialogue took place between representatives of CSOs from the DRC and Rwanda, whose governments are not on good terms.



Refugees, North Kivu © Sylvain Liechti



Conflicts resolution workshop, Congo, 2010



REPONGAC's General Assembly, Congo, 2011

■ **Analyses and data:** the NGDE has led to many analyses of the conflict in the DRC and the Great Lakes region and on the role of civil society and regional and international institutions (ECOWAS, AU) in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. There is much information and many ideas for supporting advocacy initiatives by African civil society actors.

■ **Reforms:** the DRC electoral law has been reformed and restructured and the Electoral Commission now includes CSOs and their representatives (2 members out of 11).

■ **Common positions** among civil society on the situation of violence and recurrent conflicts in the sub-regions of Central and Southern Africa were elaborated and presented at regional ECOWAS conferences and to the Heads of State of SADC countries.

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

The NGDE highlights the role of civil society in conflict prevention in Central Africa. CSOs can, firstly, **promote good relations between bordering countries** through citizens' initiatives for sharing and cooperation on issues of common interest. Civil society should also maintain its commitment to **improving governance** and to fighting for the **respect of human rights** and the implementation of relevant international conventions. In particular, it requires defending against any interference and irregularities of the democratic process during the election period. Finally, **sub-regional economic and policy integration** through the establishment of a sub-regional Parliament, a common currency and market, border police cooperation, as well as a **more equitable distribution of natural resources** among citizens, would promote lasting peace at the interstate level.

Regional civil society is therefore called upon to work for **a Central Africa sub-region freed from all types of domination, which is governed democratically and where its citizens fully enjoy all their rights**. Initiatives and advocacy campaigns should include information about:

1. **the consolidation** of a democratic culture and rights among the population and political elites;
2. **the promotion** of economic governance in Central Africa and its resources based on the rejection of any foreign interference;
3. **the intensification** of transnational cooperation processes: on the one hand, between populations on trans-border issues and capabilities, on the other hand, at the institutional level relating to security issues and border control;
4. **the enlargement** of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development of Nairobi 2006, and its effective implementation;
5. **the promotion** of the rule of law and the implementation of justice reforms in all countries of Central Africa.

Financing for development

Context

The level of development aid is a crucial variable in the fight against poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. International aid from the richest States, members of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, did not exceed 0.31% of GNI in 2011 despite many commitments to reach 0.7%. Moreover, the global financial crisis that began in 2008 caused a contraction in the level of aid.

Alternative sources of funding for international development assistance are therefore needed. The NGDE offers viable options starting with two distinct dimensions. On the one hand, the analysis of three potential mechanisms for financing development assistance, specifically: the tax on financial transactions (Tobin tax), the fight against tax evasion and tax havens, and financial inclusion of the poorest through the promotion of access to financial services. On the other hand, the NGDE analyses the action of new donor countries (Brazil, China, India, Russia, South Africa, Korea, etc. - 29 countries in total) in order to contribute to the transparency of aid that they provide.

NPF & RC PARTNERS

InterAction (USA – Secretariat), ABONG (Brazil), BOND (UK), CONGAD (Senegal), Coordination SUD (France), NFN (Nepal), INFID (Indonesia), PIANGO (Pacific Islands), VANI (India).

Main activities

■ **Strategic monitoring** is assured and **information**, data and guidance notes are **shared** with approximately 500 civil society actors globally. For this purpose, a mailing list is used, as is participation in conferences and meetings, as well as postings on websites and newsletters.

■ InterAction coordinates within the NGDE, IFP and beyond, the **development of strategic notes and positions** on the issues of financial inclusion and the fight against corruption and tax evasion. ABONG and VANI implement **advocacy strategies** targeting the practices of their respective governments on development aid.

■ With strongly established common positions, NGDE members have **made their voices heard** at meetings of the G20 in Cannes (2011) and Los Cabos (2012), of the G8 at Camp David (2012), in the long “post-Busan” work (*Building block on South-South cooperation*) and the BetterAid Coordinating Group, as well as during initiatives of bilateral cooperation (the German cooperation’s Forum on Multilateral Development).

Results

■ **Widespread knowledge:** the document “Seeking a better Understanding of Emerging Donor Countries in the International Aid System” clarifies the role of emerging donors in the policy and funding of international aid. It is widely disseminated among global civil society organisations and presented at international meetings and processes.

■ **Notes on anti-corruption positions and measures:** position papers prepared within the NGDE and relating to tax havens and financial inclusion are used in 34 countries to develop advocacy during the G8 and G20. The G20 Anti-corruption position papers and measures to combat the phenomenon (Action Plan 2013-14, Heads of State final declaration- art. 77-80).

■ **Advocacy coalitions:** the dissemination of information and tools to develop advocacy creates solidarity among CSOs in the concerned countries, and facilitates the emergence of international synergies that make advocacy more effective and better heard.

■ **“Tobin Tax”**: advocacy in the United States on the issue of taxing financial transactions convinced the government not to block the efforts of other countries to adopt such legislation and even to provide their political and technical support. At the end of 2012, 11 countries in the Euro zone expressed interest in adopting such a measure.

■ **Transparency of new donors**: structured advocacy initiatives started in Brazil and India – two new donor countries. In particular, the Indian government has published its first report on the granting of development assistance to other countries.

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

1. TAX ON FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

- The national CSOs and their platforms challenge emerging donor country governments, as well as the countries receiving their aid, to provide more transparency regarding the motivations and the modalities for granting aid.
- Advocate for greater inclusion of civil society in the programming and evaluation mechanisms for aid provided by new donor countries.
- Based on the Busan Partnership, coordination is to be strengthened between traditional and emerging donors.

2. FIGHT AGAINST TAX HAVENS AND CORRUPTION

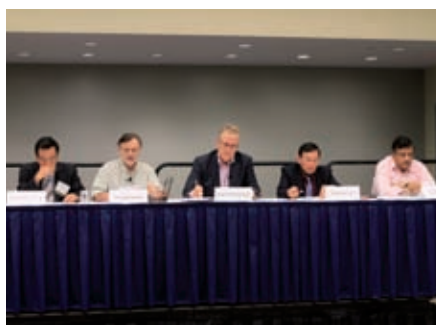
- Include civil society in the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group.
- Fight against tax havens through the adoption of more stringent legislation on the identity of funders, the repatriation of wealth, as well as by perpetuating the work of the G20 Financial Action Task Force.
- Effective implementation of national legislation on corruption and in particular those arising from the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials.
- Expand and apply global standards of transparency relating to the actions and market conduct of large natural resource extraction companies.

3. FINANCIAL INCLUSION OF THE POOR

- Promote the collaboration between different groups of stakeholders in the implementation of national strategies for financial inclusion.
- Incorporate the objective of financial inclusion for the poorest populations in the elaboration of public policies.
- Establish documentation at the national level and an operational structure to address the financial needs of the public covering all social categories.



InterAction Forum, Session
on New Donor Countries, USA, 2011



InterAction Forum, Session
on New Donor Countries, USA, 2011



InterAction Forum, idem, 2012

Regulation of agricultural markets



Context

NPF & RC PARTNERS

Coordination SUD (France - Secretariat of NGDE through its member GRET), CILONG (Chad), CNONGD (DRC), CONGAD (Senegal), CONGCOOP (Guatemala), FONGA (Angola), NFN (Nepal), Mesa de Articulación and CONCORD (Regional Latin American and European NPF platforms).

The liberalisation of markets has led to increased vulnerability of farmers to the volatility of agricultural prices. The recent price rises have highlighted the vulnerability of poor consumers and of countries dependent on food imports. Price volatility has become a central priority in the international agenda. Other issues affecting agriculture- including land seizures and the impact of agriculture on climate change- represent cross-cutting challenges that have an impact on social inequalities and the future perspectives of new generations. Building up on these analyses, the NGDE objective of “Regulation of agricultural markets” aims to be involved as a key negotiation platform on food security issues: the FAO’s Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in relation to the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM).

Main activities

The NGDE revolves around consultations, workshops and shared reflections on the **sidelines of international meetings**. Before these events, members of the NGDE exchange information and data, build common positions and adopt an advocacy strategy. Members of the NGDE gathered:

- in Rome (October 2009) on the occasion of the annual meeting of the CFS of the FAO, in order to launch the work of the NGDE.
- in Brussels (May 2010) on the occasion of the Forum “FATE- *Food, Agriculture, Trade and Environment*” organised by CONCORD, in order to structure the work of the NGDE (Chart of principles, organisation and work planning) and to define its priorities (integrate and influence the CSM- CFS);
- in Dakar (February 2011) the NGDE integrates the work of the World Social Forum (WSF) in addressing the themes of volatility of agricultural prices, land seizures, agro-fuels and the crisis of small-holding agriculture;
- in Nice (November 2011) on the sidelines of the G-20 meeting, the denunciation of the land seizures and the responses made by civil society in eight different countries is at the centre of the communication of the NGDE and of IFP members participating in the “Alter-Forum”.

In 2012, the NGDE concentrated its work on the preparation and **participation in the FAO CFS-CSM** which took place in October in Rome. CILONG, CONGCOOP, Mesa and Gret participated. This resulted in a meeting note and a position of the IFP on the topics addressed by the CFS.



Committee on World Food Security of the FAO, Italy, 2012



Vietnam © Kibae Park



Agricultural market regulation, WSF, Senegal, 2011

Results

■ **Many documents elaborated**, which are analytical works and position notes on crucial topics in agriculture and which take into account different countries:

- **Small-holder farming and agrarian reform**: “Which public policies for small-holder agriculture in the South?” (Coordination SUD, 2009); “Calling for agrarian reform” (CONG-COOP, August 2010); “DRC: chronic food dependence and persistence of the empty belly” (CNONGD, 2010);

- **Regulation of agricultural markets and food security**: elements for a debate on the regulation of agricultural markets (UNITAS Bolivia, 2009); “The organisation and regulation of world agricultural trade, myth or reality?” (CNONGD, 2010); “Agriculture and Food Security in Nepal: a position paper” (NFN, 2011); common position of the IFP on the theme of “Agricultural investments” on the occasion of the FAO annual Conference” (Mesa de Articulación, October 2012).

■ **Capacity-building**: participation in the NGDE initiatives strengthens the capacity of participating NPF, particularly on specific issues (regulation of agricultural markets, prices and dynamics of international markets, relations between land seizures and agro-fuels, fragility and potential of small-holder agriculture).

■ **Integration of NPF in global governance processes**: the main result is the participation of some IFP members at the FAO CSM-CFS meeting. The results of the 39th session in October 2012 were significant in several aspects:

- **adoption of “draft 0” of the Global Strategic Framework (GSF) for Food Security and Nutrition**: based on an extensive consultation, the GSF provides a framework for coordinating food security and nutrition strategies;

- **launch of the process for developing principles designed to promote responsible agricultural investments**: defined through an inclusive consultation process, the principles will be submitted to the CFS for approval in October 2014;

- **food insecurity in protracted crises**: the CFS launched a consultative process for the elaboration of an “Agenda for Action for Addressing Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises”;

- **convergence of policies**: from the results of the High Level Expert Forum on Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises (HLEF), the final declaration of the 39th session of the CFS includes recommendations on social protection policies and issues related to climate change.

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

In order to be effective, an NGD approach related to agricultural markets must focus on a limited number of themes:

1. Investments in agriculture: through active participation in the consultation process for the definition of the principles aimed at promoting responsible investments in agriculture;

2. Monitoring the effectiveness of the CFS: NPF can play a decisive role in the follow-up of the decisions of the CFS, such as the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and their impact. The definition of the concept of food sovereignty is also a major issue;

3. Intensification of investment in small-holder farming, which represents, for example in Latin America 60% of agricultural production and 70% of rural employment. Creator of jobs and environmentally friendly, this agricultural model strengthens the social fabric and builds up food sovereignty. The issue is to have local infrastructure and adapted financial services to revitalise local markets and regional and sub-regional trade routes to strengthen social and productive farmer-based structures, to envision significant reforms in accordance with the guidelines of the Porto Alegre Declaration of 2006.



Context

NPF & RC PARTNERS

PIANGO (Pacific Islands – Secretariat), ACCION (Chili), ABONG (Brazil), Coordination SUD (France), CID (New Zealand), CICSO (Cook Islands), FCOSS (Fiji), KANGO (Kiribati).

Climate change is a crucial topic that weighs heavily on the future of the planet and its inhabitants. In the Pacific region, the situation is alarming, with small island States being the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and major weather events that would ensue (increase of the level of the sea, tidal waves, etc.). This vulnerability manifests itself not only in material damage, but can be translated into food insecurity, forced migration and displacement, loss of native culture, de-structuration of economies, etc. However, since the 2009 Copenhagen Summit, climate negotiations are slowing down and policies are not making significant, immediate or binding commitments. Furthermore, parallel to the global financial crisis and its effects

on employment and household income, there is a reduction in the interest of world public opinion and the media– and by consequence, of governments– on climate change.

Main activities

Members of the NGDE **participate in major international events** on the environment and international development. In Copenhagen (COP15) in December 2009, in Dakar in February 2011 (FSM) and in Busan in November 2011 (High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness), the director and representatives of PIANGO took the opportunity to encourage the international community to mobilise and take the necessary measures in order to counter a climate catastrophe affecting primarily the islands and populations of the Pacific.

Aware of future scenarios describing the climate crisis as certain, PIANGO brought together partners from six Pacific islands in a **regional workshop** (Fiji, December 2011). Through the identification of the main challenges for the region, it was possible to highlight the religious, cultural and spiritual foundations used to support resilient populations who are preparing for the physical effects of climate change.

The theme of **advocacy** was also at the centre of the concerns of the NGDE. Mitigation and adaptation to the effects of climate change must be supported by a strong mobilisation of public opinion, both at local and global levels, which will lead to awareness of the challenges posed to traditions and ways of living of the populations in the most vulnerable regions. Thus, **capacity-building** was undertaken for civil society actors to conduct advocacy and strategic communications campaigns, as well as the development of a “Toolkit” indicating the paths for resilience to benefit people of the Pacific Islands.

Results

■ **Sensitisation of the international community:** the participation of the director of PIANGO at important summits drew public attention to the urgency to act on the consequences of climate change for the Pacific Island States.

■ **Regional thematic coalition:** meetings among NPF that took place within the framework of the NGDE helped to establish dialogue and exchanges of ideas among civil societies and to build common positions representative of the region with regard to international and global forums.

■ **Widespread information:** NGDE members saw their capacities augmented due to the acquisition of scientific data and up-to-date information.



Climate change workshop, PIANGO, Fiji, 2012



Climate change workshop, PIANGO, Fiji, 2011



Kiribati Island © Eskinder Debebe

■ **Traditional knowledge as a tool for resilience:** local knowledge and cultural traditions are tools which enable people to cope with the difficult consequences of climate change. NGDE highlights these principles which become real strategies which are available to local populations and serve as models for other indigenous populations who are also facing the climate crisis.

■ **Newsletter:** it attracts the attention of public opinion, including in the Pacific region, relating to the challenges posed by climate change.

■ **“Toolkit”:** completed in 2012, it adapts itself to various geographic contexts of the Pacific and can be relevant to diverse audiences. It focuses on the modalities and various instruments (communication, artistic creations, scientific information, etc.) and on the themes of “climate justice” and the preservation of biodiversity. Finally, it draws on traditional practices to build resilient societies which respect human rights. The “toolkit” is built on the basis of a dialogue between local institutions and CSOs and is based on practical experiences in the Pacific Islands (notably Kiribati).

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

1. Cooperation between people of the Pacific which has been established through the NGDE should be maintained and deepened in order to catalyse the attention of local and international public opinion in relation to the effects of climate change on the people and states of the region.

2. The concept of **resilience** is consistent with current estimates of irreversible climate change in the medium and long term. Resilience also becomes a way to preserve local traditions and to seek references in the traditional culture that can help people survive the coming changes and its associated dangers in the least traumatic way possible.

3. The **“toolkit”** is an instrument which can be adapted to different realities to prepare vulnerable populations to cope with the risks and most brutal effects associated with climate change.

4. The issue of climate change cannot be addressed without considering **human rights**. The effect of a worldwide system of production and consumption affects global populations unevenly. Redistribution of resources to deal with unequal risks should be central on the agendas of international summits on development and aid.

Access to water and sanitation



Context

During its 64th plenary session in September 2010, the UN General Assembly recognised “the right to safe and clean drinking water as a fundamental right, essential for the full realisation of the right to life and of all human rights.” Moreover, sanitation- often the poor relation of public action- is an essential condition for ensuring the right to health, adequate housing and to fight against infant mortality.

In an environment increasingly marked- both in developing and in industrialised countries – by a joint dynamic of reduced public resources and the privatisation of water services (on the basis of an official discourse that prioritises the benefits of “public-private partnership”), an increasing number of people may be excluded from realising this fundamental right. According to United Nations estimates, today 1.1 billion people do not have running water and 2.4 billion lack access to adequate sanitation.

NPF & RC PARTNERS

CONGAD (Senegal - Secretariat), NGOs and CSOs of Senegal, REPAOC (regional platform of NPF of West Africa), VANI (India).

Main activities

■ The NGDE focused on the context of Senegal and the Sahel, with a “**blue book**”, reprinted in 2012, which contributes to the definition of a national policy for water management in Senegal. The NGDE Secretariat provides up-to-date information to NPF members and any other local and regional actors who may be interested in aspects of the water management system in Senegal, as well as the identification of actors involved in the implementation of policies, programmes and projects relating to the access to water and sanitation. In collaboration with REPAOC, these proposals have been submitted to ECOWAS.

■ **A regional seminar** in Ouagadougou in November 2009 allowed for a mapping of the situation of Sahelian populations in terms of the provision of water and their access to sanitation. The meeting identified civil society and NGO initiatives working to affirm the right of access to water.

■ **An international conference** (Dakar, October 2011) brought together representatives of the NPF, networks and international NGOs, associations, relevant state services, representatives of local communities and the private sector. It was an opportunity to exchange and share best practices related to access to water and sanitation, to analyse existing policies and to define advocacy strategies to influence future choices. The symposium also focused on advocacy options and common positions to advance at the World Water Forum in Marseille in 2012.

■ **According to this logic, the NGDE built relationships with the “Water Coalition”** of France, which brings together dozens of organisations for the effective realisation of the right to water and sanitation throughout the world.

Results

■ **Reliable mapping**: the international symposium in Dakar and the NGDE have allowed a reliable inventory of good access to water and sanitation for the population of West Africa. Statistical, demographic and scientific data have been collected with the participation of a wide and specialised audience.

■ **Thematic coalition**: the NGDE unites the actors who are working to ensure that the poorest populations have real access to basic water services. To this end, the NGDE

outlines possible sources of funding, policies for expanding the coverage of water and sanitation, and provides the outlines and principles for advocacy. Finally, it provides a list of indicators that serve as a reference for both advocacy by civil society as well as for government actions.

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

1. KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROBLEM

- Share knowledge and experiences related to access to water and sanitation with a view to developing common strategies and actions.
- Raise awareness in schools, the media, among indigenous peoples, as well as among political leaders and actors.
- Support the strengthening of technical skills of actors working in the sector of access to water.
- Systematically bring together the issues of access to water with the quality of water.

2. OBLIGATIONS OF THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

- Achieve a minimum availability of safe and drinkable water for vulnerable populations, from 30 to 50 litres /capita /day.
- Compel governments to establish and maintain adequate sanitation infrastructure.
- Continuous monitoring by CSOs of state policies to ensure access to water and sanitation (especially those based on a public-private partnership).
- Gradually decentralise management skills and water and sanitation management.
- Establish a regulatory body for water and sanitation involving civil society.

3. FINANCING ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION

- Introduce micro-finance to enable excluded and poor households to gain access to water and sanitation networks.
- Develop innovative and sustainable strategies for financing (taxes, remittances from diaspora, decentralised cooperation for technical support and equipment, etc.).

4. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE AFFIRMATION OF THE RIGHT TO WATER AND SANITATION

- Develop and strengthen partnerships between actors at local, national and international levels and take the opportunity of international summits to prepare for events that aim to bring the themes of the right to water and sanitation to the centre of the global agenda.
- Strengthen collaboration between civil society and media.
- Involve more people in sanitation management.



International Conference on Water and Sanitation, Senegal, 2011



Cameroon © A. Rozberg



International Conference on Water and Sanitation, Senegal, 2011

Fighting social inequalities and exclusion



Context

NPF & RC PARTNERS

ACCION (Chili - Secretariat), CONGAD (Senegal), Coordination SUD (France), Mesa de Articulación, CONCORD, REPAOC (coalition of NPF in Latin America, Europe and West Africa).

Addressing the issue of inequality means adding a political component to the debate on poverty, expanding it to include topics such as fiscal justice, innovative financing for development, solidarity and the dignity and respect of human rights. Recent studies show that 10% of the richest people in the world have 83% of global wealth. The thirty richest countries hold 60% of that wealth. Conversely, the poorest half of the world's adult population owns only 1% of global wealth. The gap between the rich and poor is widening, especially since the outbreak of the financial and economic crisis of 2008.

Inequality is a central theme in public policy debates and business models in Latin America, where the gap between rich and poor is constantly widening. It is the most unequal region in the world, where 80% of the population lives in cities, of which a quarter live in slums.

Faced with this situation, NGOs and CSOs should give the debate an eminently political dimension. At the national level it means creating a dynamic of deepening democracy and at the international level of achieving greater equality through the reform of the global financial system and redefinition of the mechanisms and flow of international cooperation.

Main activities

Documents and analyses relating to the theme of inequality and its political significance were developed and presented at the World Social Forum in Dakar in February 2011. Moreover, the dissemination of information has found fertile ground through the launching of the Report on Democracy and Development of the LAOPD in May 2011. Common positions were prepared for the participation of civil society representatives at the High Level Forum in Busan and during the 6th Euro-Latin American Forum (September 2012). They related to:

- The restrictions and threats affecting CSOs in Latin America. These claims were widely disseminated among governments in the region.
- The establishment of a regional coordination initiative "Beyond 2015", prioritising the themes of social and economic inequalities in the elaboration of development objectives post-2015.

Numerous **meetings at the regional and international levels** have provided the opportunity to present analyses and common positions. In particular:



IFP's space in the WSF, Senegal, 2011



EU-LAC Summit, Chile, 2012



EU-LAC Summit, Chile, 2012

- A workshop organised at the WSF in Dakar on the theme of innovative financing for development and the fight against inequalities to consider when defining the MDGs post-2015.
- Participation in the CONCORD Assembly (June 2011) and its discussions and working groups, including on European- Latin American relations and the G8/G20 meetings.
- Preparatory meetings and communication in relation to the Euro-Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society Forum (September 2012), from which a joint statement was presented to the Heads of State and Government at the EU-LAC Summit in January 2013.
- Participation in meetings of the “Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness”, which provides an opportunity to participate in global civil society processes and to highlight the theme of inequalities.

Results

- **Political positioning:** the NGDE defined positions on the issue of inequality at the global level and at the level of Latin America and the Caribbean. These documents (“Focus on inequalities: towards a civil society political agenda on inequality”- “Democratic alternatives to inequality and injustice in times of global crisis”) are widely distributed among the NPF, CSO and NGO members of the Mesa de Articulación, as well as the global network of the IFP.
- **Cooperation between actors:** the NGDE helped the NPF of Latin America to organise regional meetings of the Mesa de Articulación and to address the themes of inequality and social and economic justice with a common perspective. The NGDE and Mesa contributed to policy dialogue with CONCORD and other international and regional actors for the “Forum of Civil Society in Latin America”, as well as at various events in 2012/13 (the Latin American Summit of Heads of State and Governments, WSF in Tunisia, regional “post-2015” consultations).

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

- 1. Consolidate democracy** by strengthening the role of social actors in mechanisms of public policy formulation, controls and transparency of public administration, advancing the process of decentralisation and regionalisation of political responsibilities and administration, ensuring the legitimacy of social mobilisation and constitutionalising mechanisms of citizen participation.
- 2. Politically and legally ensure the realisation of economic and social rights** defending labour union rights to oppose trade agreements that involve commodification of public goods, strengthening mechanisms of the welfare state through a reversal of the trends to privatisation, establishing a more redistributive fiscal system.
- 3. Build a new international financial system** based on the reform of the Bretton Woods Institutions so that they are part of a strengthened and democratised United Nations. This new system would involve the adoption of measures (taxation, capital controls) against financial speculation that promote the strengthening of social and cooperative banks, proscribe tax havens and fight against tax evasion, and limit the debt of countries and households.
- 4. Establish criteria for environmental and climate justice**, establishing binding mechanisms that require States to ensure the respect of their natural, cultural and traditional resources, and that develop resilience in communities.
- 5. Reform policies of development assistance**, asking that the industrialised countries meet their commitments to allocate 0.7% of their GNI to international aid, demanding an end to conditional aid, ensuring that aid is constant, sustainable and predictable in the long term, promoting the direct participation of CSOs in evaluation mechanisms of international cooperation programmes.

Enabling environment for CSOs



Context

In many countries, CSOs face restrictions on their freedom of expression and speech. During consultations of the “Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness” network, the need to ensure an environment enabling to the work of CSOs has been identified as a priority in 70 countries. Restrictions faced by CSOs can take the form of a legally binding normative instrument as well as the restrictive application of existing laws or a restriction of public resources available to the sector and voluntary associations.

To create an environment enabling to the work of CSOs, it is essential that the issue is raised on the global agenda. For this, the IFP aims to be a tool to expand the space for CSOs and to protect them from any attempts to limit their prerogatives, at three levels:

- Create links between the NPF to establish forms of support between them;
- Produce and share updated information relating to the risks and limitations experienced by CSOs around the world;
- Launch campaigns in support of NPF and CSOs limited or attacked by national authorities in the exercise of their freedom of expression and in their social and political initiatives.

NPF & RC PARTNERS

VANI (India - Secretariat),
MACOSS (Mauritius), Inter
Action (USA), FCOSS (Fiji),
CID (New Zealand), NFN
(Nepal), INFID (Indonesia),
ABONG (Brazil), Coordina-
tion SUD (France).

Main activities

The NGDE conducted a **study** entitled “The enabling environment for civil society organisations: a global campaign.” It focuses on nine countries from where members of the NGDE are drawn, and aims to better understand the environment in which national CSOs are working, particularly with regard to the obstacles that are imposed by legal, security and institutional systems. Specific attention is given to the registration procedures for CSOs, the norms that regulate the receipt of funds from abroad, the tax system for CSOs and the political relations between the government and the CSO sector.

The analysis of the context has since been further advanced regarding the **NGO/ CSO environment in India**. It accounted for the latest legislative developments affecting the third sector and the differences between regions of the country, the identification of good practices among associations of internal governance and management, the forms of existing dialogue between CSOs and government in order to achieve a higher level of cooperation, and the modalities for sharing information within the third sector nationally.

NGDE members took part in numerous **international events**, advocating for recognition at the global level of the need to ensure free space for CSO initiatives that will enable them to contribute their skills and technical proposals and policies to meet the challenges of world development. Thus, members of the NGDE were:

- in Dakar in 2011 and in Tunis in 2013 at the World Social Forum;
- in Jakarta and Siem Reap (2011) on the sidelines of the “Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness” which helped to establish a functional link between the themes of aid effectiveness and environmental issues favourable to the activities of CSOs. In Siem Reap, the IFP facilitated a workshop that demonstrated the value of having a comprehensive policy framework to strengthen the voice of civil society on international issues.



VANI's study on enabling environment for CSOs, 2012



IFP's workshop: enabling environment, FSM, Tunisia, 2013



Asian Development Alliance Meeting, Thailand, 2013

Results

■ **Analytical tools:** discussions on the enabling environment provide instruments for analysis and evaluation of public policies which are particularly beneficial for CSOs/NPF in non-democratic countries and in developing countries, where the question of freedom of expression and civil society action is more urgent. The NGDE provides analytical frameworks and establishes indicators that can be applied to a wide variety of geographical, political and societal contexts.

■ **Positioning on the global agenda:** the theme of the enabling environment for CSOs is permanently featured in the debates advanced by global civil society networks. Common positions are presented at international summits to the attention of governments, media and global public opinion. They strongly convey the idea of the central role of CSOs in the defence of rights and the promotion of sustainable and human development.

POSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ADVOCACY

1. Constructive partnership between CSOs and governments. The direct involvement of CSOs in development strategies is the key to the success of public policies. It is necessary to change the perception that CSOs have of the government and to raise awareness of the latter on the benefit of close involvement of civil society in the definition of priorities and actions which have a social impact.

2. Communication between civil society actors. The modalities and frequency of communication between CSOs is crucial for seizing the potential of civil society actions and proposals. Better coordination of approaches in a framework of coordinated responses can be achieved through increased opportunities to meet, the development of partnerships and synergies to conduct joint projects, as well as raising awareness among association frameworks.

3. Deeper understanding of the work of CSOs. The mission and modalities of CSO actions should be better understood by the CSOs themselves, as well as within the context in which they operate.

4. Strengthening the management of CSOs. Although having significantly strengthened their capacity for action and technical skills, CSOs should perfect their administrative and managerial capacity. Charters and principles of the third sector and the structures that assure the monitoring and transparency of the work of CSOs can help to achieve this.

5. Clear identity and representation of CSOs. To engage in a constructive dialogue with governments and the private sector, CSOs need to specify the features of their identity, especially in regard to their representativeness of civil society bodies.



3. METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS OF NON- GOVERN- MENTAL DIPLOMACY FROM THE IFP NGD EXERCISES

1. Surveys and analyses

Context analysis is a crucial step in designing an advocacy message. It is central to the added value that CSOs have acquired in the international relations system. Accurate knowledge of issues, precise context analysis, and well-grounded judgment on a theme which is at the heart of the negotiation are indispensable tools for the construction and conduct of credible and effective advocacy. Such analyses may be based on field surveys which favour taking into account popular opinion, or may be the result of a research activity that adopts scientific criteria.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Design a questionnaire to conduct a field survey
- Deploy a field survey through the supervision of local investigators
- Establish terms of reference for leading research
- Capitalise on the results of a study: publication, presentation, dissemination.

2. Joint field missions

The definition of a joint position on a topic of regional or global interest benefits from shared visions, experiences and proposals of different civil society actors and of various national origins. Therefore, a joint mission in a local context which involves CSO representatives from different countries - sharing the same sensitivity or similar concerns - can help to build relationships, common visions and complementary advocacy strategies that fit into a coordinated agenda.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Transnational coordination and joint preparation of a field mission (phases, documentation, communication principles, etc.)
- Ensure and optimise the visibility of the field mission
- Follow-up and continuity of the results and outcomes of the field mission
- Design of a transnational issue and joint regional proposals.

3. Information dissemination / Knowledge network

A CSO can effectively contribute to the construction of a non-governmental diplomacy approach by being at the origin of information sharing among partners, networks and supporters on a global scale. The intensification of transnational relations of CSOs, as well as the growing accessibility of digital technology today make it possible to spread information, calls, ideas and proposals at an extraordinary speed and to reach a potentially unlimited number of interested actors. This is a major opportunity to build common global positions and to coordinate complementary actions on issues affecting different geographical contexts in a similar manner.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Organisation and management of communication tools (mailing list, newsletters, Web sites and resource centres, blogs and digital platforms for exchanges, social networks, etc.)
- Strategic monitoring, information archiving and news follow-up .

4. Capacity building

Strengthened capacities are essential for working in non-governmental diplomacy, especially with regard to strategic communication, conflict management, negotiation skills and the development of knowledge on the topics of advocacy. Indeed, CSOs can affect international negotiations only if they have capacities, knowledge and relevant positions.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Preparation of the group's work in order to enable dynamic self-learning
- Analysis and evaluation of basic capacities in order to design a capacity-building plan
- Establish the terms of reference of a training
- Impact monitoring: strengthened capacity indicators
- "Training of trainers" methodologies and dissemination of the knowledge acquired in the reference network.

5. Sideline participation in international events

The participation of NPFs in meetings and events that are part of the global agenda of development negotiations allows them to give visibility to their proposals and to forge links and partnerships with other global civil society actors involved in non-governmental diplomacy. Approaching governmental delegations, representatives of civil society as a whole can follow (and document) the final stages of the negotiations, or even influence their conduct.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Strategic monitoring of the agenda of international negotiations on governance and development
- Presentation and media coverage of common positions
- Preparation and implementation of approaches aimed at influencing negotiations
- Organisation of demonstrations, gatherings and dissemination of informative materials
- Designing a monitoring mechanism and documenting commitments taken in international meetings of (inter-)governmental bodies.

6. Partnership with public institutions

The process of conducting advocacy and joint actions of non-governmental diplomacy is enhanced by the interaction of CSOs with sector-specific institutions and public administrations. Indeed, advocacy is more effective if it directly targets administrators who are responsible for the definition of standards and the implementation of public policies. It is then essential to build relationships of trust, collaboration and to consistently look for common issues- be they personal, ideological, political or institutional.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Approach of public institutions and of their technical and administrative branches
- Preparation and presentation of analyses and relevant technical proposals, able to fill gaps or strengthen the governmental standards and policies system
- Build-up a relationship of trust and search for common interests - partial and thematic
- Advocacy on the national media, in parallel to the negotiation with the bodies concerned and to strengthen the "contractual power" of CSOs.

7. Structuring of civil society

In order to have a role and an impact at the global level of governance and international negotiations process, CSOs must structure themselves as a sector and as actors to establish synergies within a collaborative framework so as to base their representativeness on clear and solid foundations. The structuring of CSOs facilitates the exchange of information, sharing of experience for mutual reinforcement of capacities, and the creation of coalitions that can provide more impact to the initiatives undertaken.



ELEMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A "TOOLKIT":

- Organising and leading conferences, seminars, thematic round tables of civil society
- Build thematic or regional coalitions
- Communication and dialogue with Governments and other actors involved in governance and the economy
- Capacity building for administrations and civil society platforms.

Conclusion

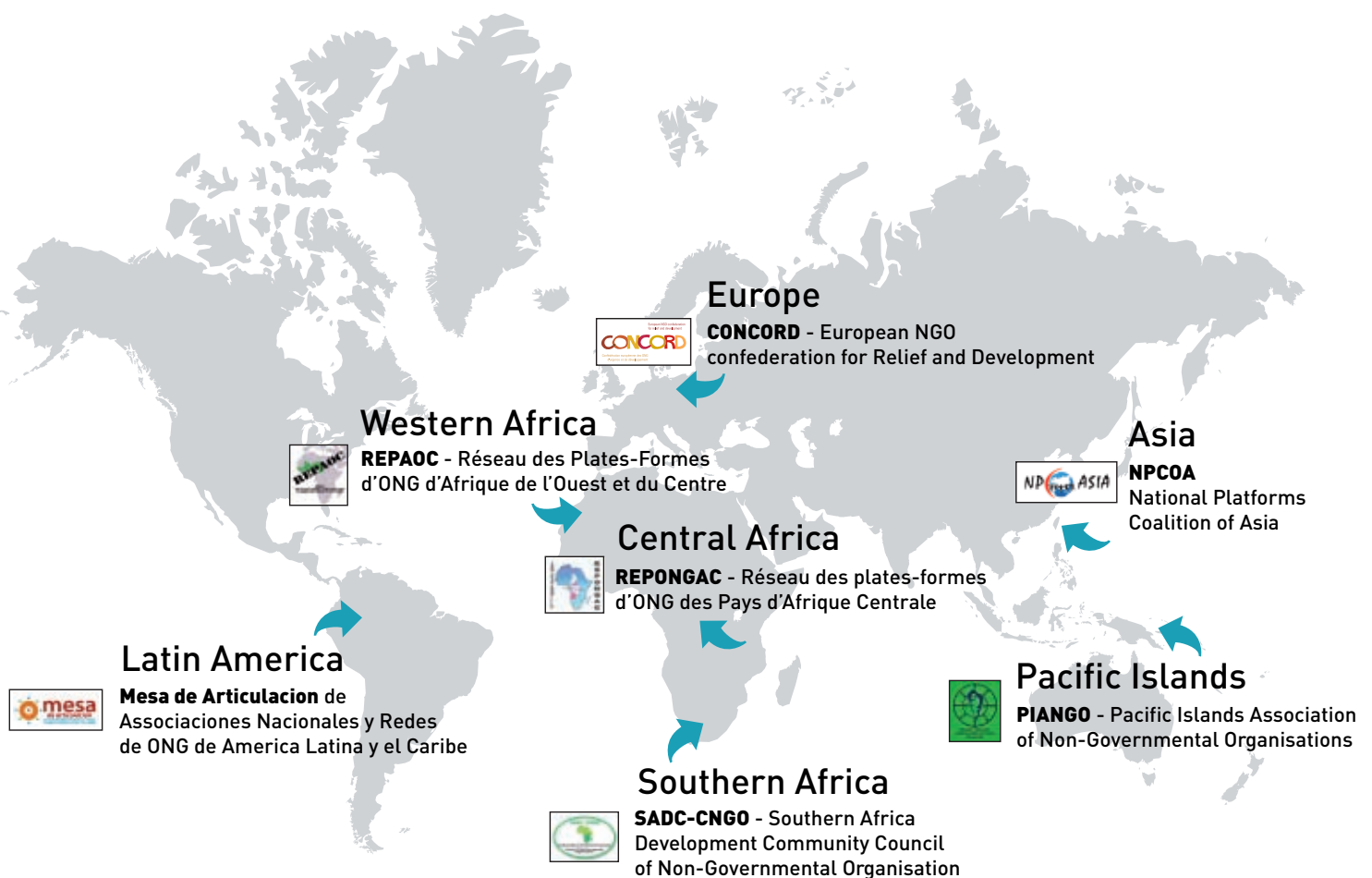
This document demonstrates the strength and relevance of non-governmental diplomacy initiated by the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP). Non-governmental diplomacy is rooted in the everyday of NGOs' actions in support of marginalised groups and builds on this experience to establish findings on the injustice and unacceptable inequalities of our world. It develops realistic and substantiated positions to advance recommendations that lead towards solutions in critical spheres such as conflict prevention, regulation of agricultural markets, access to water and sanitation, etc. It promotes these positions in governmental and intergovernmental fora which shape tomorrow's world. It brings into these fora the voice of marginalised groups and of citizens who together want to build an equitable world.

Still young, non-governmental diplomacy deserves our attention because it has a promising future.

NPF MEMBERS OF THE IFP

ABONG - Brazil • **ACCIÓN** - Chile • **ADIR** - Burundi • **ADOC / Convergencia** - Mexico • **ANC** - Peru • **ANONG** - Uruguay • **BOND** - UK • **CCC** - Cambodia • **CCIC** - Canada • **CCOAIB** - Rwanda • **CCOD** - Congo • **CCONG** - Colombia • **CFRONG** - Benin • **CISCO** - Cook Islands • **CID** - New Zealand • **CIONGCA** - CAR • **CNONGD** - RDC • **CNOP** - Gabon • **CODE-NGO** - Philippines • **CONGAC** - Cameroon • **CONGAD** - Senegal • **CONGCOOP** - Guatemala • **Coordination SUD** - France • **EENGD** - Argentina • **Espace Associatif** - Morocco • **FCOSS** - Fiji • **FECONG** - Mali • **FNB** - Bangladesh • **FONGA** - Angola • **FONGDD** - Guinea • **FONG-STP** - Sao Tome and Principe • **FONGTO** - Togo • **FORS** - Czech Republic • **INFID** - Indonesia • **InterAction** - USA • **JANIC** - Japan • **KANGO** - Kiribati • **KCOC** - South Korea • **LUNGOS** - Seychelles • **MACOSS** - Mauritius • **NFN** - Nepal • **NNNGO** - Nigeria • **Partos** - Netherlands • **PFNOSCM** - Madagascar • **Plataforma das ONGs de Cabo Verde** - Cape Verde • **Belgian Platform of NGOs for Emergency and Development** - Belgium • **Finnish NGO Platform** - Finland • **SKOP** - Malta • **SLOGA** - Slovenia • **SPONG** - Burkina Faso • **TANGO** - Gambia • **UNITAS** - Bolivia • **VANI** - India.

The Regional coalitions associated members of the IFP





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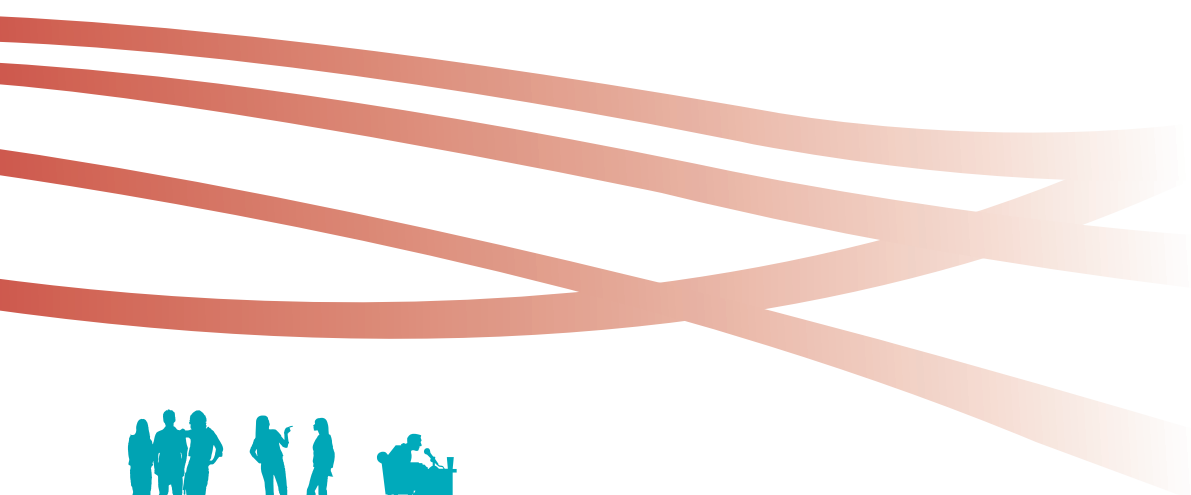
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