



## Session 3 – Upholding civil society’s role and space to ensure inclusive partnerships and locally-led development

**Session objective:** Hearing from a broad range of stakeholders, the objective of this session is to further unpack the previous session’s discussion by focusing on the importance of trust-building approaches in providing an enabling environment for civil society and their role in multi-stakeholder partnerships, locally and nationally. The session follows the discussion on enabling civil society in development at last year’s Effectiveness Summit, and will look at how actors have taken action in 2023. The session will consider how and why civil society organizations are best able to reach where state institutions cannot, and the critical role they play in ensuring no one is left behind. It also represents an opportunity to introduce the proposed “Thematic Initiative on Enabling Civil Society through Trust-Building”.

Civil society organizations across the globe remain committed to realizing the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda. They have engaged in and influenced discussions on development finance and in particular, official development assistance, for decades. At the same time, civic space is eroding in many parts of the world, which hampers CSOs' capacity to play these functions.

December’s Effectiveness Summit, through the Geneva Outcome Document, emphasized how commitments on the enabling environment for civil society – like 2021’s OECD/DAC recommendation on Enabling Civil Society – can serve as trust-building measures, and as a guide for how stakeholders can better partner together, and generate necessary political buy-in for implementation.

This year’s Busan Forum provides a unique opportunity to further unpack how the realization of Geneva Outcome Document commitments reflected in the Global Partnership’s 2023-2026 Work Plan, including the rollout of the fourth monitoring round, will contribute in practice to fostering and informing decisive multi-stakeholder actions at country level.

As key development actors in their own rights, civil society organizations bring to the Busan Forum the voices of those furthest left behind, and the urgent call for coordinated action that responds to the current crises through upholding the effectiveness principles, and the principle of inclusiveness, in development cooperation.

### Guiding Questions:

- Since the Geneva Summit, what progress has been made on commitments made regarding upholding and supporting enabling environment for civil society at country level?
- What initiatives have been developed and how can they contribute to address the gaps in development partner commitments towards the civil society enabling environment and effective development cooperation?
- From a civil society perspective, what are the main barriers to realizing effectiveness commitments at the country level?
- How should ideas on ‘partner-empowerment’ and ‘de-colonization’ be integrated into conversations around effective development co-operation and locally-led development?