



Global Cooperation April 2007

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Black Sea and Good Governance

Hrachya Amiryan, Black Sea NGO Network Secretary and Pobeda Loukanova, Network Lobbying Group member participated in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) *Institutional Renewal and Good Governance* Working Group meeting held in March, 2007 in Istanbul.

The aim of the NGO participation was to develop cooperation between BSEC and the NGO Network. Ms Loukanova made a presentation suggesting possible fields of cooperation that are of bilateral importance. The suggestions included seminars and



training; organisation of joint events; capacity development in public administration; mobility of civil servants in BSEC member states; exchange of experience and good practice in state administration in member states; organisation and implementation of research concerning corruption and poor governance in member states; dissemination of helpful information received from member states through the NGO Network website.

Ms Loukanova advocated a joint effort in improving relations between states and civil society and in particular proposed the implementation of social dialogue systems; the introduction of cooperation with the private sector of economy, as well as with organisations of civil society; the implementation of systems for the qualitative improvement of the public service delivery procedures.

In relation to particular problems Ms Loukanova suggested the development of service provision contracting systems in those countries where NGOs have an essential role and the exchange of experience on effective cooperation between central authorities, local authorities and the NGOs.

After these suggestions by Ms Loukanova the chairman of the session Saša Dinić (Serbia) led discussion on the ways in which cooperation could become a reality. The co-chair of the session Panagiotis Ntais (Greece) suggested organising a joint event to outline the importance of issues introduced in the NGO suggestions. BSEC Permanent International Secretariat representative suggested the cooperation could start with cooperation on a particular project. She mentioned that BSEC is open to cooperation and the potential will be increased if two or three member states join the programmes suggested by the Network.

In response to the question: *How can cooperation become a reality*, Network Secretary Mr Amiryan suggested implementing joint research in some member states. He proposed the subject of research could be the assessment of NGOs providing social services and the delegation of service provision to NGOs. He proposed a joint working group to develop the research and find likely financial sources from EU institutions. The co-chair Mr. Panagiotis Ntais (Greece) mentioned that she sees the delegation of social service provision to NGOs as an important subject. If Greece continues to remain the country coordinator of Working Group activities then special attention will be devoted to that issue at the next working group next meeting.

The complete text of Ms Loukanova's presentation can be found on the Network website: <http://www.bsngon.com/activities/cooperation.php>. The Black Sea NGO Network is supported by ICSW. Ms Pobeda Loukanova represents Club Economica 2000 which is the Network focal organisation in Bulgaria. The Network Secretary, Hrachya Amiryan, works with Mission Armenia.

International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres

Our colleague organisation International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres (IFS) has just launched a new newsletter. The first edition reports that IFS is in the midst of a strategic planning process. The next IFS gathering is to be held in Oradea, Romania, 10th to 13th October 2007. Hosted by the Women's Organisation Bihor in Oradea and other IFS partners in Romania, the seminar's theme is: *Living in Multicultural Europe*. The Seminar will include presentations and workshops from a variety of IFS European members. If you wish to receive registration and other information about this program, please contact Sharon Haas at: haass@puc-mn.org. If you would like to receive the IFS email newsletter please contact Sharon. The website address for IFS is: <http://www.ifsnetwork.org/>.

MDG Targets The IPC has released a new issue of their 'One Pagers:

<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager33.pdf>.

MDG Targets: Misunderstood or Misconceived? by Hamid Tabatabai. This One Pager takes issue with Jan Vandemoortele's One Pager # 28:

<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager28.pdf>

On Privatisation - International Poverty Centre UNDP

Privatising Basic Utilities in Africa: a Rejoinder

In this One Pager John Nellis argues that the authors of the IPC Policy Research Brief on *Privatising Basic Utilities in Sub-Saharan Africa: The MDG Impact* overestimate the ease of improving performance in state-owned firms and underestimate the amount of investment capital required for run-down African water and electricity utilities. He highlights the importance of not eschewing private investment but rather finding mechanisms to make it more politically acceptable, socially responsible and mutually beneficial. Online at: <http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager31.pdf>.

Debating the Provision of Basic Utilities in Sub-Saharan Africa: a Response to Nellis

In this One Pager Kate Bayliss and Ben Fine respond to John Nellis on the privatisation of basic utilities in sub-Saharan Africa. They argue that the privatisation experiment has worsened the provision of basic utilities by eroding state capacity or preventing it from being expanded. They maintain that privatisation advocates have over-estimated the capacity of the private sector. They point out that they are not precluding the participation of private capital, but situating it within the economic and social functioning of a country as a whole and trying seriously to weigh alternative forms of public and private financing of the provision of utilities. Online at:

<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager32.pdf>.

Editor's Comment

As mentioned in previous issues of Global Cooperation there has been a strong interest by the World Bank and governments in a 'big systems' approach, meaning big dams and big power stations. There is an urban bias to these utilities. Big projects lead inevitably to bureaucratisation no matter if they are corporations or publicly owned. Corruption creeps in. There can be more modest solutions to water supply including small dams and small bores. Similarly electricity has some modest technologies. For example in the Pacific there are 'run of the river' hydro generators which generate enough for a village or two, with minimum grid interconnectivity. Solar power has its uses in desert regions, generating enough power during the day to keep workshops and refrigerators operating, with small night time battery supplies for lights. When water and electricity are provided locally, problems such as transmission losses are minimized.

Analysing and Achieving Pro-Poor Growth

The recent issue of IPC's journal: *Poverty in Focus* concentrates, not so much on the definition of pro-poor growth, as the analysis of it and its policy implications and results. The authors spell out and apply different definitions and measures in discussing various policy-related aspects of pro-poor growth. Available online at:

http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCPoverty_in_Focus010.pdf

Social Cohesion

The Social Cohesion Development Division of the Council of Europe has released the 18th volume in the series: *Trends in social cohesion*. The new volume is entitled: *Achieving social cohesion in a multicultural Europe: Concepts, situations and developments*. Enquiries to: gilda.farrell@coe.int.

Development aid falls 5.1% in OECD Countries in 2006

Official development assistance (ODA) from members of the Development Assistance Committee has fallen by 5.1% to USD103.9 billion. In real terms this is the first fall in ODA since 1997. The actual level is the highest recorded except for 2005. ODA was high in 2005 due to the Paris Club debt relief operations (Nigeria and Iraq mainly). This boosted ODA to the highest level in 2005. In 2006 debt relief grants still represented a substantial proportion of ODA. ODA fell by 1.8% if the debt relief of USD 3 billion for Iraq and 11 billion for Nigeria is excluded. Preliminary data show that net ODA to Sub Saharan Africa rose by 23% in real terms but once debt relief for Nigeria is excluded the rise is only 2%.

The only countries to reach or exceed the UN target of 0.7% of GNI were Sweden, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark. In 2006 the net ODA by the USA was USD 22.7 billion which is a fall of 20% in real terms and takes the USA ODA ratio to 0.17%. The fall was largely due to the Iraq debt relief in 2005.

Japan net ODA was USD11.6 billion representing 0.25% of GNI. This was a fall in real terms of 9.6%. But there were high expenditures in 2005 including relief after the tsunami and debt relief for Iraq. Japan's ODA has been trending downwards since 2000 except for 2005. For the full OECD report including tables visit:

http://www.oecd.org/document/17/0,2340,en_2649_33721_38341265_1_1_1_1,00.html.

New Website for ICSW Japan

<http://www.icsw-japan.or.jp>. The site is currently only in Japanese but an English version will be available within a couple of months.

Coming events

ICSW Europe: International Expert Seminar on social investment and social protection as productive factors: *The role of decent work and social integration for an economically successful and socially cohesive society*, Madrid (Spain), 25th to 27th May 2007. Hosted by the Comité Español para el Bienestar Social (CEBS): secretaria@cebs-es.org
<http://www.cebs-es.org/cebs/default.asp>.

ICSW Europe: European Region conference: *Equal opportunities for individuals, groups and nations* 14th to 16th June 2007, Vilnius University (Universiteto Street N 9/1, Vilnius, Lithuania):

http://www.fsf.vu.lt/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=853&Itemid=1273.

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