

Towards Rights-Based Development Cooperation in the Arab Region

Saturday, April 21st, 2018

Commodore Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), in partnership with CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), and with the support of CPDE and National Endowment for Democracy (NED), held a workshop on development effectiveness in the Arab region, on April 21st, 2018, at Commodore Hotel in Beirut, Lebanon. This workshop was held as part of ANND's work on development effectiveness, which includes establishing an observatorio to monitor development cooperation effectiveness and civic space in the Arab region. Participants discussed a framework of development cooperation that seeks to engage the private sector from a human rights based approach, promote south-south cooperation as an alternative to a complete dependence on aid transferred from the north to the south, and provide an enabling environment for civil society.

The morning session included a presentation of papers by Ms. Zeina Abla, Dr. Mohamad Saadi and Ms. Kinda Mohamadieh, followed by discussions of the content.

Ms. Abla presented a critical overview of development financing in the Arab region, elaborating on the high debt service in non-oil producing Arab countries, as well as international financial organizations' policies, still following a classic neoliberal model at their core. Ms. Abla discussed as well different resources of financing, such as taxation, ODA, and private financial flows.

Dr. Saadi presented the concept and different forms of south-south cooperation, touching upon the challenges and prospects of Arab-Arab cooperation. Finally, Dr. Saadi proposed suggestions and recommendations to build an effective Arab-Arab cooperation.

Ms. Mohamadieh discussed the role and accountability of the private sector in development processes, underlining the importance of a human rights based approach, as well as the role of civil society in monitoring practices of the private sector.

In the afternoon, in the context of preparing for the observatorio, Ms. Bihter Moschini delivered a session on enabling environment and civic space, being an integral part of effective development cooperation in the Arab region, highlighting the role that civil society plays in development and the reality of civic space in Arab countries. Ms. Moschini discussed the indicators that can be used to monitor the enabling environment for civil society, along with already existing global initiatives to monitor civic space. Mr. Ashraf Hussein delivered as well a session on development cooperation effectiveness, based on a paper that Mr.

Hussein is in the process of making. The session included training and discussions about sources of aid and different indicators to monitor development cooperation effectiveness.