

## Position Paper

### WTD – Working Together for Development

Local Authorities and Civil Society, together as agents for development in Europe and neighbourhood countries

#### 1. Introduction

During the last two decades, Local Authorities (LAs) gained significant expertise in terms of conflict prevention, decentralization and confidence building in development cooperation, showing themselves as real catalysts for change<sup>1</sup>. The strong cooperation between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and LAs, used in the decentralised cooperation methodology, has been recognised as a relevant tool to promote a shared and bottom-up approach to development<sup>2</sup>.

ALDA, which has been one of the first European actors promoting this practice through the network of Local Democracy Agencies, is launching a new Alliance between LAs and CSOs aimed at promoting the advantages of good cooperation between LAs and CSOs in the development process at the European, national and regional level.

The increased involvement of LAs and CSOs in EU development cooperation policy generates the need for the establishment of a new joint Alliance in order to capitalize and improve their joint experience and methods of actions.

#### 2. The objective of the WTD Alliance

The WTD Alliance aims at fostering the joint role of LAs and CSOs as promoters of democracy, social justice and human rights<sup>3</sup>, promoting and favouring cooperation among all types of LAs and CSOs in order to bring their best practices of cooperation to European, national and regional institutions, trying to influence their development policies consequently. The Alliance aims at playing a relevant political role at the EU level, as well as at the national and regional level when it comes to the promotion of good cooperation between LAs and CSOs in development cooperation. As such the WTD Alliance

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<sup>1</sup> *Local Authorities: actors for development*  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0626:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>2</sup> *Cotonou Agreement*, revised version 2010  
[http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/second\\_revision\\_cotonou\\_agreement\\_20100311.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/second_revision_cotonou_agreement_20100311.pdf)  
*Local Authorities: actors for development*  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0626:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with the principles set by *Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change*  
[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/documents/agenda\\_for\\_change\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/documents/agenda_for_change_en.pdf)

aims at integrating its voice and sharing its experience in the proposed Policy Forum on Development<sup>4</sup>.

In particular the WTD Alliance and its members commit to:

- Strengthen their capacity to build trans-national alliances and to disseminate best practices;
- Increase the number of multi-actor partnerships and consolidate exchanges between different types of LA and CSO networks, within their organisations and with Community institutions;
- Strengthen the capacity of LA and CSO platforms in the new Member States, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) countries in order to allow them to play a more active role in their countries and at the EU level;
- Ensure smooth integration of EU development policies and promoting democratic local governance;
- Provide LA associations and CSO networks with new capacities to act as "multiplier" agents in the field of development cooperation especially through fostering the involvement of their members at the local, regional and national level;
- Raise public awareness and educate the public on development cooperation issues.

Working together at the local level opens new perspectives of effectiveness and opportunities for development, bringing new approaches and perspectives to the policy makers. The promotion of good cooperation between LAs and CSOs to ensure more efficient development has been highlighted several times by the European Commission and the main European stakeholders in the field of development cooperation<sup>5</sup>.

### 3. Methodology of the WTD Alliance

#### *3.1 Multi-actor and multilevel approach*

The WTD Alliance will adopt a multi-actor approach aimed at creating synergies among all the involved stakeholders, trying to coordinate their joint work and make their joint actions more effective. In order to multiply the synergies within the WTD Alliance very different actors focused on different fields of action are involved, such as associations of Local Authorities, thematic associations of Local Authorities, regional networks of Local Authorities and national and regional CSO networks.

The WTD Alliance aims at coordinating the joint work of its members on different levels, trying to reach coherence at all levels of cooperation between the involved LAs and CSOs.

This approach is needed to avoid potential fragmentation of development assistance<sup>6</sup>.

#### *3.2 Specific geographical focus*

The WTD Alliance is characterized by a very specific geographical focus of utmost importance for the EU development agenda and the EU enlargement process. It will focus its actions mainly in the new Member States and in the European neighbourhood, including the IPA countries.

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<sup>4</sup> *Creating a space for dialogue with Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities: The Policy Forum on Development*, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> *Final Statement on the Structured Dialogue Process*, 2011.  
[http://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/images/f/fb/Joint\\_Final\\_Statement\\_May\\_2011.pdf](http://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/images/f/fb/Joint_Final_Statement_May_2011.pdf)  
*Creating a space for dialogue with Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities: The Policy Forum on Development*, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> *Local Authorities: actors for development* <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0626:FIN:EN:PDF>

The involvement of members coming from new Members States and from the neighbourhood countries aims at producing a wide and long-lasting effect on the integration of EU development policies in those countries.

### 3.3 Ownership

The WTD Alliance aims at proposing its members joint development of the principles of ownership and partnership as set out by the *European Consensus on Development*<sup>7</sup>.

WTD gives direct responsibilities and ensures the right of initiative to its members.

WTD has a strong local dimension by re-granting part of the resources of the Alliance foreseen within the Programme WTD to small initiatives made by local authorities and local CSOs.

WTD will elect its own co-chairs for better ownership and involvement.



<sup>7</sup> *European Consensus on Development*  
[http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/european\\_consensus\\_2005\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/european_consensus_2005_en.pdf)