

## Global Civil Society Express Worries on Shrinking Space Bangladeshi CSOs Urge for Enabling Environment as Equal Development Partner

Dhaka, 25th October, 2017. Today in a dialogue held in a hotel in the capital global CSOs expressed their concerns as spaces for CSOs is shrinking in the global development processes. On the other hand, Bangladeshi CSOs urged an effective and enabling environment as equal level development partnership. They placed these concerns and urges from the event titled, “Bangladeshi CSO Dialogue with GPEDC, Realizing Enhancing Development Cooperation and the SDGs : Bangladesh Perspectives.” The seminar was jointly organized by the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) group in Bangladesh and COAST Trust. The dialogue was chaired by Dr. Qazi Kholiquzzaman, Chairman, PKSF, the Honorable State Minister for the Ministry of Finance and Planning Mr. Muhammad Abdul Mannan MP was present as the Chief Guest and of the event was moderated by Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Executive Director, COAST Trust. The Development Effectiveness Wing (DEW) of the Economic Relation Division (ERD) supported the dialogue.

CSO leaders from various countries and some Steering Committee Members of the GPEDC (Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation) participated in the meeting. Bangladeshi CSOs like representatives of ADAB, FNB, CAMPE, CDF, BNNRC, Citizen's Platform 4 SDGs also participated in the event. Among others Mizanur Rahman, Deputy Secretary, Development Effectiveness Wing of ERD, Maria Theresa, Vice Chair of CPDE, Nabine Gbossa, Head of Division, Global Partnerships & Policies, OECD, Marcela Martinez from El Salvador, Ashekur Rahman, UNDP Urban Specialist, Ms Janet from Canadian Govt., Mr Udo from German Govt also spoke at the occasion. Bangladeshi CSOs representatives including Anisatul Fatema Yousuf, Director, Dialogue & Communication, Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Dr Tofail local govt specialist, Mr Jashim from ADAB and CDF, Mr Tapan from CAMPE, Mr. Morshed from POPI, Mr. Ahmed Swapan from VOICE placed their comments during the dialogue.

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury placed the welcome speech and he also presented the historical journey of the aid effectiveness to development effectiveness. He presented the glimpse of the various process like the International Conference on Financing for Development, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness, The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation etc. He said, climate change and Rohingya refugees will be two major development challenges for Bangladesh while Bangladesh embarking to achieve SDGs.

Mizanur Rahman said, Government is very much committed to ensure CSO participation in development efforts.

Maria Theresa said, There are many important roles of CSOs in development. In development discourses we are experiencing many discourses, but commitments are not fulfilling. CSOs have to do their homework to be engaged with government processes. Nabine Gbossa expressed worries that CSO space are shrinking. Janet and Udo mentioned that , CSO has to be given equal level treatment as like as state actor and private sector

Ahmed Swapan Mahmud said, Govt., INGOs and UN organizations must give equal level treatment to CSO s development partnership, in view of WHS and Grand Bargain policy outcome. Mr Jashim said, UN agencies and INGOs should not be involved in direct operation at the field level as their transaction cost is very high, rather they should do partnership with local CSOs.

Dr. Qazi Kholiquzzaman said, CSOs engagement in any development process is very much vital in ensuring sustainability and effectivity. Government should create spaces for the CSOs and CSOs should involve and accountable to mass people in all sorts of development efforts as much as possible.

Muhammad Abdul Mannan MP said, **Government is very keen to ensure** engagement of CSOs in development process, we believe it is very much important to realize the SDGs. To achieve the SDGs international communities have also huge responsibilities on them.

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