Concept Note

Rwanda Civil Society Open Day

Kigali,
Thursday June 1, 2023

April 2023

1. Introduction

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are involved in forging strategic partnerships with governments, businesses, and donors. They are stakeholders in the development process. CSOs are making strides to improve vulnerable livelihoods. They are gradually considered not only as advocates or community service providers but also as enablers for change, policy influencers, project incubators, experts and implementing partners.

While the African Development Bank Group (the Bank) recognizes the importance of programming with organized citizens' groups such as civil society to achieve quality delivery of services, the effective integration and institutionalization of Civil Society Engagement (CSE) in the Bank's procedures and processes is of importance. Hence, as an institution that contributes to the economic development and social progress of African people, the Bank has a responsibility to ensure effective development with a lasting impact on the lives of the people it serves. Engaging with vibrant, dedicated, and diverse civil society across development priorities will build citizens' trust and esteem in Bank's operations by enhancing community ownership.

Over the years, the Bank has deepened its commitment to engaging civil society to deliver on the Bank's High 5 priorities. During the 2020 Africa wide CSOs Forum, the President reaffirmed these commitments, some of which are:

- The Bank should have a specific intervention that strengthens the institutional capacity of CSOs;
- The Bank should support CSOs on advocacy work to promote Africa's development and the High 5s in countries, to help accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Africa Agenda 2063;
- The Bank should further strengthen its engagement with civil society at the community level on projects to ensure that the intended impacts are being well monitored and achieved;

One of the operational approaches mapped out for engaging CSOs, and mainstreaming CSE in the Bank's operation is the Open days.

The Open day is a country dialogue between the Bank and CSOs to share information about the Bank's operations and projects. The goal is to obtain feedback from CSOs on their experience and expectations of existing Bank's projects. In the Bank Evaluation department's (IDEV's) 2021 report, it shares that the Bank does not systematically engage with civil society and that the lack of tools, guidelines, and resources for CSE has hindered meaningful engagement. IDEV called for the systematization and regularization of CSOs' Open Days at the country level to foster partnerships.

The preparation of the Open day is under the leadership of the country office in close collaboration with the Civil Society and Community Engagement Division (AHGC2).

2. Objectives

Main objective: The overall goal of the Open Day is to share information and obtain feedback from CSOs on existing Bank funded projects, as key stakeholders in the achievement of development objectives of the country. Through presentations and open discussions, participants will have an opportunity to discuss the challenges faced as well as existing opportunities that the Bank can look into with a view to improving the quality the services to the people it serves through the various projects that it funds. The outcome of this meeting will be documented and key follow-up actions agreed on**.**

Specific objectives:

- Re-share information on the Bank's Rwanda Country Strategy Paper 2022 –2026, and the status of the investment portfolio;
- Share information on Bank Group CSO engagement plan;
- Explore opportunities and areas of mutual collaboration in the implementation of the Bank's operations and projects;
- Share updates on CSO footprint in Rwanda, their areas of focus and how that relates/links to the Bank Projects and High 5s (including setting up of a marketplace);
- Document lessons learnt and best practices concerning the Banks operations in the RMC

3. Action - planning

Below is a list of activities to be carried out before, during, and after the event.

List of participants: A list of participants for the event is to be prepared. This list will include stakeholders from the CSOs, such as Non-Governmental Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Associations and Cooperatives, Media (Print and electronic), Private sector, and representatives from the Rwandan Government.

An invitation letter is to be developed and sent to the proposed participants of this event including representatives from the government.

Agenda that outlines the different sessions, is to be prepared. Details of time allocated, individuals responsible for moderating the different sessions will be highlighted in this agenda.

Presentation by Country Team: The CORW prepares and presents highlights of the Bank's work in the country especially in relation to the High 5s, demonstrate the contributions of the Bank to the NST1, sectoral strategies and actions. The presentation underlines achievements made in the different areas of operation, the challenges faced, the mitigation mechanisms put in place and broadly speaking the progress realised towards attaining objectives of the TYS.

Presentation by CSOs: CSOs shall present their involvement in Bank funded projects with emphasis on how this was organised, what the benefit was, the challenges faced and recommendations to improve civil society engagement with the Bank.

Open Session: The different presentations and projections shall be followed by a Q&A session during which the Bank Operations staff shall answer questions and clarify issues arising related to the Bank's work.

5. Deliverables

The report highlighting comments, feedbacks and recommendations on enhancing CSO engagement will be developed for internal and external stakeholders.

The CORW in collaboration with AHGC2 shall review the day's proceedings by administering a questionnaire that participants will use to assess the day's event. Key actions will be documented and updates made and shared on a regular basis.

A tripartite platform is put in place to follow up the recommendations of the Open Day and serve as a liaison with the Bank's Country Office. This Platform shall comprise representatives from the Government, the CSOs and the Bank. The Platform shall be an avenue to discuss collaborations between the three stakeholders on policy dialogues and the Bank's operations in Rwanda.

6.Date and Format of the CSOs Open day

The confirmed date for the civil society open day in Rwanda is Thursday June 1, 2023 and will take a physical format at the AFDB Country office in Kigali

ENHANCING CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN THE BANK'S OPERATIONS

Civil Society Open Day
Rwanda

Thursday June 1, 2023

AGENDA

Opening Session		
10:00 – 10:05	**Opening Ceremony**	Moderator
10:05 – 10:20	**Welcoming Remarks**	Country Manager Rwanda **Ms Aissa Toure** **Introductory Remark** **Mme Zeneb Toure- Manager AHGC 2** **Good will messages** **RCSP Chairperson** **Representative of Government** **NINGO Chairperson**
10:20:10:25	**Short Video on the Bank's engagement with Civil Society**	**AHGC2**
10:25 – 10:50	**AFDB in Rwanda** • Country Portfolio: Key highlights; key results achieved, challenges and lessons learned • Rwanda CSP 2022-2026	**Ms. Chinyolo, Mpho Vivian** **Mr. Walter Odero**
10:50 – 11:00	**Open Session (Q&A)**	**Moderator**
11:00-11:15	**Tea Break**	
11:15-11:30	**General overview of Civil Society Engagement in Rwanda, Opportunities and challenges**	**Rwanda CSO Forum**
11:30 – 11:45	**AfDB's CSO Engagement Action Plan**	**Ms. Chikanne Ezeigbo - Civil Society Officer RDGE**
11:45 – 11:55	**Open Session (Q&A)**	**Moderator**

11:55 – 12:15	**Panel Discussion** **Civil Society's experience collaborating with the AfDB - Opportunities and Challenges**	**Panelist** • **Rwanda CSO Forum** • *PAFO*
12:15 – 12:35	**Panel Discussion 2** **Civil society and Private sector collaboration in fostering higher productivity and accelerating structural transformation**	**Moderator** **Panelist** • **Rwanda CSO Forum** • **Private sector** • **AFDB**
12:35 -12:40	**Summary of recommendations and action points**	**Ms Vivian Chinyolo- CPO**
12:40-12:55	**Way forward: Modalities of forming a Tripartite platform and follow-up actions**	**Mme Zeneb Toure-Manager,AHGC 2**
12:55 -1:10	**Vote of thanks and closing remarks**	**Mme Aissa Toure Sarr - Country Manager** **CSO Representative- Mr. Joseph Ryarasa**

Commenté [CE1]: TBC